

MINUTES OF THE 8th MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORKING PROGRAMME (SDNP) HELD ON JUNE 20, 2004.

A meeting of the Steering Committee for the Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) was held on June 20, 2004. Prof. Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Chairperson, SDNP Steering Committee presided.

The following members of the Steering Committee were present:

1. Syed Tanveer Hussain, Secretary, MoEF and NPD, SEMP
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
2. Dr. Quazi Shahabuddin
DG, BIDS
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
3. Mr. S.M. Al-Hussainy, Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
4. Mr. KMSA Kaiser
(Representative of Secretary, Planning Division,
Member, SDNP Steering Committee)
5. Dr. M. Asaduzzaman, PD, SDNP
Member-Secretary, SDNP Steering Committee
6. Dr. M. Aminul Islam, SDA, UNDP
(Representative of UNDP),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
7. Dr. Babar N. Kabir
PC, PMU, SEMP
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
8. Mr. Ershad Shafi Chowdhury, Secretary General, ISP Association
(Representative of ISP Forum),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee.

The Chairperson welcomed the members to the meeting. The discussions and decisions of the Steering Committee meeting are as follows:

8.1 Approval of Minutes of the 7th Meeting of the Steering Committee

The minutes of the 7th meeting of the SDNP Steering Committee were approved.

8.2 Follow-up of the decisions of the 7th Meeting

The PD, SDNP presented a report on the follow-up of the minutes of the 7th meeting.

8.2.1 Revision of the PIP:- The revised PIP along with integrated complete revised budget has been submitted on May 26, 2003.

8.2.2 Main server's connectivity to Internet through VSAT:- Pilot office at Panthapath has been connected with SCPC VSAT link with SingTel under Pilot-2. After obtaining the interim permission for installation of the Internet Exchange on April 21, 2004, necessary commissioning work of BDIX has started.

8.2.3 Exit Strategy:- An exit strategy including sustainability and business plan will be prepared during the second half of 2004 as per the recommendations of the Steering Committee.

8.2.4 Visit to successful SDNP:- The PD and PC made the visit during the third quarter of 2003 to oversee two successful SDNPs in Jamaica and S. Korea..

8.2.5 More connectivity for Press Clubs: Barisal, Satkhira, and Cox's Bazar Press Clubs are connected to SDNP servers in each regional node and Panchagar Press Club will be connected at a later date in consultation with the Jatiyo Press Club.

8.2.6 Collaboration with the Red Crescent: A MOU has been signed with the Secretary General of BDRCS. On the basis of the MOU, sub-nodes have been established in Barisal, Cox's Bazar and Satkhira.

8.2.7 Engagement of support staff for Pilot programmes: Recruitment for the pilot programmes within the approved budget under the revised PIP is in progress.

8.2.8 Upgradation of Mymensingh Regional Node:- So far Mymensingh regional node at BAU has been found to be a successful one. At this moment, one technical personnel (Assistant to Regional System Administrator) has been engaged to run the regional node. He has to support the student client at the cyber centre and also in-campus dial-up clients. The cyber centre is operative from 8:00am to 8:00pm and requires a minimum of three persons to manage it.

Furthermore, for extending its services to the grass root level, several dial-up and dedicated connectivity needs to be provided from SDNP Mymensingh regional node. The node needs to increase the support staff there. Provisions are there in the budget of SDNP. Restricting within the budget limit, two more support staff may be recruited.

8.2.9 Extension of the Mymensingh link to reach local community service centres:- A dial up link has been established with one local NGO in Phulpur, Mymensingh which is about 35Km away from Mymensingh, and work is in progress there focusing MDG at local level.

8.3 Decisions Taken

The following decisions were taken in the 8th meeting:

8.3.1 Approval for the Mymensingh Regional Node:- The Mymensingh regional node may be extended to operate in main phase as per the revised PIP. This will include salary/remuneration of one technical staff, three full time support staffs, and one personnel from BAU. Furthermore, keeping within the budget amount, two support personnel at BSMRAU and MPBS2 may be arranged with Tk.1500/- each per month. This will require about Tk.25,000/- in total per month.

8.3.2 Approval for the pilot offices in regional nodes:- After signing the MOU with BDRCS, three regional nodes have been established in three regional offices of the Red Crescent Society. However, the local support at the BDRCS regional stations are insubstantial compared to other SDNP partners like BAU. This has been creating difficulties in smooth running of the expensive satellite equipment and servers. Keeping the existing link between the BDRCS regional offices, the project may be permitted to establish pilot offices in other premises, if necessary. This can be

done in partnership with local NGOs, Press Clubs or other development partners. Similar action may be initiated at Satkhira and Cox's Bazar.

8.3.3 Framework of the exit strategy:- Initiatives may be started from the first half of 2005 to establish an independent entity for SDNBD and start operating from second half of 2005 in parallel with the project interventions on pilot basis, so that it may takeover completely from the beginning of 2006. However, a separate proposal will be submitted to prospective donor(s) including the UNDP seeking fund to operate SDNBD on not-for-profit basis.

8.3.4 SchoolNet Programme:- Until now SDNBD assisted in two consignments of computer to Bangladesh from the World Computer Exchange, USA. The first consignment was technically assisted by the SDNP and led by the Foundation for Education and Development (FED). The second consignment was also managed in similar fashion, but with more involvement of FED. This has been discussed with UNDP and if approved, SDNBD may be provided with complete responsibility to operate this programme within the country.

8.3.5 Virtual Library Information System (VLIS):- Until now about 150,000 records (catalogues, books, journals, publications) of 5 universities, 3 public and NGO libraries including BIDS have been uploaded in VLIS. This service is freely available on the web through SDNBD's local web server. However, to update the database regularly and to add more data one or two dedicated personnel need to be recruited for this purpose. Additional funding may be requested from UNDP, or other donor agencies.

As there were no other issues, the Chairperson thanked all the members present and concluded the meeting.

Prof. Jamilur Reza Choudhury
Chairperson
SDNP Steering Committee.